COGNITION

Cognition refers to mentally processing information. The mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience and the senses. It is also used in a wider sense to mean the act of knowing or knowledge, and may be interpreted in a social or cultural sense to describe the emergent development of knowledge and concepts within a group that culminate in both thought and action. Woodworth said that thinking is mental exploration . According to Ruch, thinking is a behavior in which at least some of the subjects that are dealt with are not physically present to sense but are represented by symbols, or in other words, thinking is actually a series of symbolic activities which represent previous learning experiences and an individual's thought processes.

Memory, intelligence, and language are important aspects of cognition. Our thoughts take many forms, including problem solving, reasoning, and even daydreaming. At its most basic, thinking is an internal representation (mental expression) of a problem or situation.

Theoretical perspectives on thought processes

- Associationism
- Gestalt
- Information processing
- Feature integration model

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➢ **Associationism**

Our mental processing is based on our senses, conceptions and perceptions. These elements are stored as varied associations that help us relate and understand new things generally through what we have already experienced, or gained knowledge about, through other mediums.

LAWS OF ASSOCIATIONISM

Aristotle (350 B.C.E) the Greek scientist, who studied in Plato's academy in Athens, came up with four laws of associationism

1. **Law of Similarity:** When we are reminded of, or recall one thing from the past experiences, similar instances will also be recalled.

   Example: If you think about your senior college mischief, your junior college and school mischief will also come in mind.

2. **Law of Contrast**: When we are reminded of, or recall things from the past experiences, instances exactly opposite to them, will also be recalled. Example: If you are thinking of your best performance at your work place, you will also think about the worst and the most embarrassing one, even if you don't want to, it will just come to your mind.

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

3. **Law of Contiguity:** When we are reminded of, or recall things from the past experiences, we also recall actions or other associations with that object that were originally experienced along with that entity.

Example: If you think of a pen, you'll also think about writing with it. If you think of a bottle full of water, you will also think about drinking from it

4. **Law of Frequency**: If a series of events keep occurring frequently, the probability of recalling similar associated instances will increase.

Example: You wake up in the morning and every day the first thing you do is read your mails, the association will be strong, and you'll continue to do so.

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